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ABSTRACT

This report, in response to a Nova Southeastern University (Florida) plan to develop policies regarding residence requirements for doctoral programs, examined existing requirements at 17 universities in the 11 states accountable to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The report recommends that Nova publish its residency requirements for each academic program and demonstrate that a substantial period of residency is available to provide students access to the university's support facilities. A literature review and examination of graduate catalogs found no consensus with regard to the number of residency credits, length of time of on-campus presence, or the type of classes which satisfy the residence requirement on how doctoral residencies are conducted, nor did catalogs ever discuss the behaviors and experiences expected during residence even when specifically addressing residency requirements. An appendix gives the residence definitions provided by each university. (DB)

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DOCTORAL RESIDENCE AT UNIVERSITIES IN THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provided an initial view of doctoral residence at universities in the 11 states accountable to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This information is provided to University administrators and center directors as the University prepares to address the recommendations received from the October 1996 Visiting Committee related to residence:

> 4.3.3 Graduate Completion Requirements
>
> Even though the completion requirements are presented in a number of the school catalogs, it is found that this is not being done uniformly, and **THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS** that NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY publish its residency requirements for each academic program.
>
> 4.3.4 Graduate Curriculum
>
> Having to do with the period of residency, where in some cases it is unclear what the actual residency requirement might be for a particular program, **THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS** that NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY demonstrate that a substantial period of residency is available to provide students adequate access to a broad range of support facilities, including the research library associated with the campus.

Both by literature review as well as examination of graduate catalogs from a sample of Southern universities, it became obvious that there is unequivocally no consensus on how doctoral residence is conducted. Some universities have two or more years of contiguous enrollment as the residence requirement. Other universities require only one year, or two contiguous semesters of on-campus enrollment for residence. Other universities build residence around enrollment in summer term and day and night courses during regular terms. Of course, non-traditional universities use other models for residence, such as attendance in intensive one-week or two-week seminars, collaboration through telecommunications, and occasional weekend meetings.

One noticeable outcome from this report is that, although the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools lists a series of behaviors and experiences that are to occur during residence, these activities are never mentioned in graduate school catalogs when residence is defined. Instead, the typical definition of residence is that the student will enroll for X number of credits in courses offered on-campus for Y amount of time. Without exception, in the catalogs reviewed for this study, behaviors, experiences, and outcomes are not addressed as part of the residence experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In 1972, Nova Southeastern University established doctoral-level external degree programs in Educational Leadership, Higher Education, and Early Childhood Education. A doctoral-level external degree program in Business Administration was started in 1978. In 1983 the University expanded the notion of distance education by starting a computer-based doctoral program in Information Science (*Nova Southeastern University Fact Book*, 1995). Although these doctoral programs are often mentioned as the first of their kind, Allan (1984) looked into the history of distance education and discussed Illinois Wesleyan University and how this university offered external degree programs at the doctoral level from 1873 to 1910.

Purpose of This Report

Nova Southeastern University's end of 1996 Winter Term enrollment was 15,650 students (*Research and Planning Weekly Enrollment Report*, May 18, 1996). Of this number, 2,651 doctoral students (16.9 percent of total enrollment) were enrolled in an external degree program (Table 1). As opposed to higher education's current interest in distance education, these programs have a long history and they were fully operational when the University received affirmation of accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1975 and 1985 (*Self-Study: 1983 - 1985*; p.49).

The most current criterion by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1996, pp.37-38) on residence is:

> A substantial period of residence **must** be included to provide student access to a wide range of support facilities, including a research library, cultural events and other occasions for intellectual growth associated with campus life, significant faculty/student interaction, opportunities for student exposure to and engagement with cognate disciplines and research scholars working in those disciplines, and significant peer interaction among graduate students.

Using this definition for residence, the October 1996 Visiting Committee issued two recommendations specific to the external doctoral programs at the University:

4.3.3 Graduate Completion Requirements

Even though the completion requirements are presented in a number of the school catalogs, it is found that this is not being done uniformly, and **THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS** that NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY publish its residency requirements for each academic program.

4.3.4 Graduate Curriculum

Having to do with the period of residency, where in some cases it is unclear what the actual residency requirement might be for a particular program, **THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS** that NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY demonstrate that a substantial period of residency is available to provide students adequate access to a broad range of support facilities, including the research library associated with the campus.

Table 1

Headcount of External Degree Doctoral Students at Nova Southeastern University: End of Winter Term 1996

Center and Program	N	% of University Total
Center for the Advancement of Education		
Educational Leadership	887	
Higher Education	677	
Child/Youth Studies	390	
Subtotal	1,934	12.5
School of Business and Entrepreneurship	487	3.1
School of Computer and Information Sciences	210	1.3
TOTAL	2,651	16.9

Over 15 percent of all students at the University are affected by these recommendations. The purpose of this report is to examine how other universities view residence, to offer a framework for how the University may choose to respond to these recommendations. As presented later, universities differ widely in their definition of residence. Many universities require one year

of on-campus residence. Some universities even have two or more official definitions of residence, with variance at the program level. This report identified these many forms of residence, to show how residence for external degree students at Nova Southeastern University is only one type of residence among the many rich and varied opportunities available to doctoral students throughout the South.

METHODOLOGY

In cooperation with the University's Law Library, Research and Planning used many techniques to look into the professional and legal status of doctoral residence:

1. The Shepard Broad Law Center's Assistant Librarian for Public Services conducted an exhaustive search of Lexis and Westlaw, examining doctoral residence in the areas of case law, periodicals, and newspapers.

2. The Shepard Broad Law Center's Assistant Librarian for Public Services also made telephone contact with the Council of Graduate Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the American Council on Education. The purpose of each call was to inquire about a common vision or definition of residence.

3. The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database and the Dissertation Abstracts database were searched through use of the University's electronic library. For a topic as important as doctoral residence, these databases had only a few documents linked to residence.

4. In view of the notion that a university catalog represents a legal document and that statements in the catalog serve as binding statements (Bender, 1979; Federal Interagency Committee on Education, 1978; Peterson, 1981) Research and Planning also visited Florida Atlantic University's library to review their national collection of university catalogs. The purpose of this visit was to look for catalog definitions of residence from a sample of doctoral-awarding universities in the 11 states accountable to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

RESULTS

This study is an initial attempt to offer context on residence and how the University may choose to respond to recommendations issued by the Visiting Committee. Findings were inconclusive and indicated that residence may be as much an issue of philosophy, tradition, convenience, and marketing as it is a matter of professional mentoring:

1. At the time of the search, the electronic database search of Lexis and Westlaw, examining doctoral residence in the areas of case law, periodicals, and newspapers, yielded no citations. This outcome indicated that doctoral residence has not yet received the attention needed for inclusion in these legal databases.

2. Telephone contacts with the Council of Graduate Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the American Council on Education were all inconclusive:

   - The Vice-President of Research and Information Services of the Council of Graduate Schools affirmed that institutions construct their own definitions of doctoral residence.

   - The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, when queried on residence, indicated that there is no standard definition of residence.

   - The American Council on Education also indicated that there is no national standard on residence.

3. Queries to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database and the Dissertation Abstracts database yielded minimal responses in terms of literature reference to residence:

   - ERIC yielded only five articles where residence was part of the major discussion, and only one article had any reference to empirical measures of residence.

   - Dissertation Abstracts was also quite deficient on the issue of residence. Only six dissertations included reference to residence, and none made reference to residence from an empirical perspective.

4. The review of university catalogs was quite interesting, but mostly because of the extreme inconsistency on how residence is defined. The general definition of residence is that doctoral students will enroll for X credits in classes offered on the university's campus for Y months. Yet, there is absolutely no consistent agreement on the number of credits, time, or any of the activities that are to take place during residence.

With catalog definitions of residence appended, a summary of catalog definitions of residence is provided in Table 2. General themes include the following:

- Some universities, such as Vanderbilt (for the Ph.D., not the Ed.D.), Tulane, and Wake Forest seem to be fairly rigid and require two or more years of contiguous on-campus residence.

- Many universities, such as the University of Florida and Duke, require one year of contiguous enrollment in courses offered on-campus. There are many variations on this theme, however, such that *one year* does not always equal *12 months*.

- Other universities, like the University of Miami, the University of Georgia, and Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of Education, link residence to Summer Term enrollment. With this form of residence, students can complete on-campus residence in six months or less.

- Some universities, such as Florida International University, link residence to class attendance in night courses at off-campus satellite locations. Advertising that all course work for the Doctor of Education Broward Program can be completed in Broward County, the university defines residence as the completion of a minimum of 18 semester hours of graduate level courses within three consecutive semesters after admission to the program. With this type of residence, it is possible that a Broward County student attending classes in Fort Lauderdale would never have to travel to Dade County to visit, let alone be resident at, Florida International University's campus. Instead, all courses are offered in Fort Lauderdale at the Askew Tower, and the nearby Broward County Public Library serves as the research library for doctoral students in this Broward County-based program.

- An evolving number of universities allow even more creative means of meeting residence, often requiring very little time away from home for adult students. The University of Sarasota, which is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, uses intensive one-week and two-week sessions as part of their residence requirement.

Table 2

Summary of Residence Requirements at a Sample of Southern Universities Awarding Doctoral Degrees

Type of Residence	University
Two Years or More of Contiguous Residence on Campus	Tulane University Wake Forest Vanderbilt (Ph.D.)
One Year on Campus, or at Least Two Contiguous Terms (Excluding Summer)	University of Central Florida Duke University Florida Institute of Technology University of Florida George Mason University University of Houston William and Mary
Summer plus One Term, Before or After Summer Term; or Two or More Summer Terms	University of Alabama University of Georgia University of Miami Vanderbilt (Peabody College of Education)
Alternate Forms of Residence	University of Sarasota

SUMMARY

There is no consensus on doctoral residence among universities in the 11 states accountable for accreditation criteria established by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. For many, the notion of residence immediately calls to mind a doctoral student spending one or more years of continuous enrollment on a university campus, interacting with peer students, conducting research, and learning from experts in and out of class. A review of definitions of residence from university catalogs, in contrast, indicated that even traditional universities only tend to mention that doctoral students will enroll for X credits in classes offered on the university's campus for Y months. Of specific interest to this report:

- There is no consistent number of credits related to residence.
- There is no consistent length of time for on-campus presence.

- There is no consistent definition of the type of classes which may be used to satisfy the residence requirement. Differences between day classes and night classes and how night classes can be used to satisfy the residence requirement are not discussed in the university catalogs reviewed.

- The is no discussion of the many behaviors associated with residence, as mentioned by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in their most current set of accreditation criteria, in university catalogs when residence is defined.

- There are many instances where universities are widely inconsistent regarding any common definition of residence at the departmental level. Vanderbilt University offers two formal definitions of residence. The Ph.D. programs at Vanderbilt University demand a minimum of two years of enrollment in courses offered only on-campus. Doctoral students in Vanderbilt's Peabody College of Education, however, can use Summer terms to effectively reduce major term presence on the main campus in Nashville to a minimum of possibly three or four months.

On a different but related matter, it is interesting to note the total absence of residence as an issue in the legal databases. To date, the definition or practice of residence appears not to have gone to the courts.

It would be convenient to present residence as a continuum, with low measures of time and credits to the left, gradually increasing to the right when additional time and credits are required. If not interval, at least this vision of residence would be ordinal such that some type of ranking would be possible. Although this vision would be desirable, current practice would instead have residence presented as a scatterplot, where any relationship between time, credits, and location is the result of chance and not association. Universities differ in their residency requirements, thereby precluding classification into orderly and precise classification units.

The findings in this report may offer some degree of perspective on the nature of residence among universities in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. As evidenced by recommendations read at the exit report, the October 1996 Visiting Committee, based on review of academic center catalogs, had trouble understanding how the University implements residence for doctoral students in external degree programs. A review of all relevant catalogs (Educational Leadership, Programs for Higher Education, Child/Youth Studies, School of Computer and Information Sciences, and School of Business and Entrepreneurship) showed that the word *residence* was not clearly identified in an index, table of contents, or in any discussion about program delivery and student responsibilities. This omission concerned Visiting Committee members and may have led them to think that the University does not require residence, when the opposite is the case. Accordingly, to satisfy Visiting Committee recommendations, the University must now give more attention to residency in program literature, and residency requirements for each academic program must be published.

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APPENDIX

Residence Defined by Universities Reviewed

Duke University (1993-94):	Doctoral Requirements: The minimum residence requirement of one academic year is defined as twelve units for each of two consecutive semesters at Duke, or nine units each semester in the case of graduate assistants. (Page 21)
Florida Institute of Technology (1993-94)	The residence requirement consists of (1) the performance of research under the direct supervision of the Florida Tech faculty for at least one calendar year, and (2) enrollment in the Graduate School of Florida Tech for a minimum of two years from the time of original registration. (Page 35)
Florida International University (1995)	In order to fulfill residency requirements, students must complete a minimum of eighteen (18) semester hours of graduate level courses within three consecutive semesters after admission to the program, exclusive of dissertation credits. The student must have completed the residency requirement, or must currently be enrolled for the coursework which will constitute such completion, in the term of the Candidacy Examination. (Page 6)
George Mason University (1992-94)	All doctoral students are required to spend a minimum of two consecutive semesters, not including the summer term, in continuous registration. The doctoral program of study must include a minimum of 36 semester hours of graduate work taken at George Mason University after admission to degree-seeking status. (Page 30)

Tulane University (1992-94)

Continuous Registration Requirements: A student admitted to the Graduate School in a degree program must be in continuous registration in a degree-granting division of the University until the awarding of the degree. (Page 36)

University of Alabama (1993-95)

The minimum period in which the doctor's degree can be earned is three full academic years of graduate study. The student must spend either the second or third academic year in continuous residence as a full-time student in the Graduate School of the University of Alabama (or, if specifically approved by the faculty concerned, one full summer consisting of two terms, preceded by or followed by one regular semester). This requirement can be satisfied only by enrolling in course work; dissertation or thesis research cannot be used.

Instructors, fellows, and assistants who teach more than three hours should expect to spend more than the minimum period in residence. (Page 81)

University of Central Florida (1993-1994)

Each student is expected to complete two contiguous semesters in full-time graduate student status after acceptance into a doctoral program. Doctoral students must be registered a minimum of nine semester hours during this time.

University of Florida (1992-1993)

Period of Concentrated Study: Candidates for the doctoral degree must satisfy the minimum requirements for a period of concentrated study, beyond the first 30 hours counted toward the doctoral program, by registering for (1) 30 semester hours in one calendar year, or (2) 32 semester hours in no more than four semesters within a period of two calendar years on the University of Florida campus. Courses at the 1,000 or 2,000 level will not be counted toward the requirement for concentrated study. *(Applicable to both Ph.D. & Ed.D.)*

Candidates in the College of Agriculture may do their research at certain branch stations of the University of Florida Agricultural Experiment Station where adequate faculty and facilities are available. Page 21

University of Georgia (1994-1995)

Doctor of Education Residence: The degree presupposes a minimum of three full years of study beyond the bachelor's degree and cannot be secured through summer work alone. At least three consecutive quarters (i.e., enrollment for a minimum of 30 hours of consecutive course work included on the program of study) must be spent in full-time resident study on the campus of the University of Georgia, one of which may be a summer quarter. (Page 68)

University of Houston (1992-1993)

Residency Credit: In doctoral programs, minimum residence requirements are set by the individual departments, but in no case shall the requirements be less than one academic year of continuous full-time enrollment.

Unive sity of Miami (1991-1992)

Residence - Ph.D.
The student must spend at least two consecutive semesters beyond the first year's graduate work, wherever taken, in full-time study at the University of Miami. With departmental approval, (a) one semester of full-time study in sessions I and II can be substituted for one semester of residence, or (b) full-time study for two successive summers can be substituted for two regular semesters. (Page 37)

Residence - Doctor of Arts
The student must spend at least two consecutive semesters beyond the first year's graduate work, wherever taken, in full-time study at the University of Miami. With departmental approval: (a) one semester of full-time study in sessions I and II can be substituted for one semester of residence, or (b) full-time study for two successive summers can be substituted for two graduate semesters. (Page 40)

University of Sarasota (1994)

Intensive Courses in Residence: These offerings are presented in one-week and two-week intensive sessions. Texts and advance assignments are sent to registered students at least three weeks before the start of class. The scheduled class time includes such activities as professorial instruction, group problem solving, distinguished visiting lecturers, field trips, panel discussions, presentations, computer simulations and other academic challenges. A final reflective exercise, assigned at the end of the session, is due three weeks after the final class. During in-residence intensive terms, participants get away from the pressures of everyday life and totally immerse themselves in the learning process. The geographically and professionally diverse student body provides a stimulating environment, often producing lasting friendships and professional relationships.

Vanderbilt University (1993-94)

Residence and Course Work: The Ph.D. degree requires at least three academic years of graduate study. [ ] all students working toward the Ph.D. must maintain in-residence enrollment in the Graduate School during each semester and summer session, during which they are using the libraries or other facilities of the university. (Page 37)

Peabody College of Education at Vanderbilt University (1992-93)

Doctoral students must satisfy the residency requirement with one of the following options:

1. Two consecutive semesters (one of which may be a summer session) in which at least nine hours have been completed in each of the two terms or in which at least six hours have been completed in one term and 12 in the other.

2. Three semesters (regular and summer) in a four-semester sequence in which at least six hours have been completed in each session.

Doctoral dissertation hours may not count toward the residency requirement. (Pages 61-62)

Wake Forest University (1994-95)

Residence Requirement: A minimum of three years of full-time study, of which at least two must be in full-time residence at the University. The total allowable time for completion of the degree must not exceed seven years. (Page 17)

William and Mary (1993-94)

A minimum of three years of graduate study beyond the baccalaureate is required. A student must spend at least one academic year in continuous residence as a full-time student at the College of William and Mary after satisfying the requirements for the M.A. or M.S. degree. This may be waived only by the Committee on Graduate Studies on a petition from a department or program committee. (Page 21)